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Between the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and Burzenland in Medieval Hungary – The Teutonic Military Order status and rule in the poles of Christianity

Entre o Reino Latino de Jerusalém e a *Depressão dos Cárpatos* húngara medieval (*Burzenland*) – o *status* e *Regra* da Ordem Teutônica nas fronteiras do Cristianismo

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Abstract: The 800th anniversary of the Teutonic Order's occupation of Burzenland (Barcaság) in the eastern part of the medieval Hungary (in the Braşov region in Transylvania – Romania) will be marked in 2011. It is significant because of the role of the Teutonic Military Order as defenders of the Hungarian borders from the invasion of the Cumans heathen tribes into the western part of Hungary. Another issue of significance is the relationship between the role of the Teutonic Order located in Burzenland and their presence in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem during the thirteenth century, where they held their central headquarters and defended the Kingdom from its enemies.

This article will emphasize the idea that the presence of the Teutonic Order in eastern Hungary, in Burzenland, had not been an attempt to divorce itself from the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, where it had its centre which continued to region the Order's activities. It did serve the Military Order in furthering its institutional authority and standing amongst its membership. It also contributed to their image as defenders and promoted of the Christianity borders and it had reinforced their settlement in Eastern Europe. In this sense, their presence in Hungary was an introduction to the Teutonic tradition and military activities in the Baltic region. Burzenland was not candidate that could or would replace their Crusader Kingdom central religious and political focal place. In fact, their presence in the Latin East had remained and even was further accentuated, for their strengthening entire activity in both the Latin East and Eastern Europe as the defenders of Christendom.

Resumo: O 800º aniversário da ocupação da Ordem Teutônica em *Burzenland* (*Depressão dos Cárpatos*), parte oriental da Hungria medieval (região de Brasov, Transilvânia, Romênia), está marcado para 2011. Ele é bem significativo por causa do papel da Ordem Teutônica como defensora das fronteiras da Hungria contra a invasão da tribo pagã dos cumenos na parte ocidental húngara. Outro

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aspecto relevante é a relação entre o papel da Ordem Teutônica na *Depressão dos Cárpatos* e sua presença no Reino Latino de Jerusalém durante o século XIII, onde estabeleceu a sua sede central e defendeu o Reino contra os seus inimigos. Este artigo enfatizará a idéia de que a presença da Ordem Teutônica no leste da Hungria, na *Depressão dos Cárpatos*, não tinha sido uma tentativa de divorciar-se do Reino Latino de Jerusalém, onde estava a sua sede, pelo contrário, pois a Ordem continuou suas atividades na região. Esta presença serviu para a Ordem Teutônica promover a sua autoridade institucional e permanente entre seus membros. Também contribuiu para a sua imagem de defensores e promotores do alargamento das fronteiras do Cristianismo, além de reforçar sua posição na Europa Oriental. Nesse sentido, sua presença na Hungria introduziu a tradição teutônica e suas atividades militares na região do Báltico. A filial na *Depressão dos Cárpatos* não era uma candidata que poderia ou iria substituir a preponderante posição religiosa e política do Reino de Jerusalém. Na verdade, a presença no Oriente Latino perdurou e acentuou o fortalecimento das atividades da Ordem Teutônica, tanto no Oriente Latino quanto na Europa Oriental, como a grande defensora da Cristandade.

Keywords: Teutonic Order – Burzenland – Medieval Hungary – Cumans tribes – Herman von Salza.

Palabras-chave: Ordem dos Cavaleiros Teutônicos – Bunzerland (*Depressão dos Cárpatos*) – Hungria Medieval – Tribos dos Cumanos – Herman von Salza.

This article is dedicated with longing to my father –
Liviu Militanu (1926 Braila Romania, 1993
Ashdod Israel).

The 800th anniversary of the Teutonic Order's occupation of Burzenland (Barcaság) in the eastern part of the medieval Hungary (in the Braşov region in Transylvania - Romania) will be marked in 2011. It is significant in terms of historical research, because of the role of the Teutonic Military Order as defenders of the Hungarian borders and in view of their participation in the erection of a barrier, in the attempt to prevent the invasion of the Cumans heathen tribes into the western territory of Hungary.²

Another issue of significance is the relationship between the role of the Teutonic Order in eastern Hungary, particularly in Burzenland and their

² N. Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom, Jews, Muslims and 'Pagans' in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000-c. 1300* (Cambridge 2001), p. 33; F. Curta, *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages 500-1250* (Cambridge 2006), p. 400-405.

presence in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem during the thirteenth century, where they held their central headquarters and other strongholds.³

Contamine, in his book *War in the Middle Ages*, points out that while the Teutonic Order was established in the Latin East, and that it had even fought in that region, it was the Baltic area that had been its main target and the area where it focused in its main activities. He added, that the Teutonic Grand Master Hermann von Salza (who served in that position in the years 1210-1239), who was influential figure and in his period, was convinced that the Teutonic positions and presence in the Crusader Kingdom will eventually be terminated. Hermann von Salza had searched new focal points for the activities of the Teutonic Military Order, first in the region of Burzenland in eastern Hungary and finally in Prussia and Livonia in the Baltic region, where the Teutonic Order had grown into a major political and military force.⁴

The Teutonic Order's interest in the eastern parts of Hungary is further substantiated also by other researchers, arguing that the Order sought there a military basis since it was relatively isolated, which would have enabled them to set up their institutions at a distance from the Church and the Hungarian royal power bases. This is also, why they had engaged in fighting the Cumans tribes. It would have enabled the Military Order to pursue freely not only their military practices, but also to retain their contact to their central focal point in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem and with it, their international set up which was epitomised by the network of ties between their Latin East Centre and their other outposts in northern Europe.⁵

This essay will attempt to show the connection between the Teutonic activities in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem in the early thirteenth century and their outposts in Europe, while emphasising the importance of the Latin Kingdom to their European activities. It will further argue that the Teutonic Order not only had no intention to abandon the Latin Kingdom, but rather, that their Latin East Centre was significantly instrumental to their operations in Burzenland and other areas in south Italy, Germany and Austria.

³ M. Tumler, U. Arnold, *Der Deutsche Orden, Von seinem Ursprung bis zur Gegenwart* (Boon-Godesberg 1970), p. 7-13; U. Arnold, "Vom Feldspital zum Ritterorden. Militarisation und Territorialisierung des Deutschen Ordens (1190-c.1240)", Z. H. Nowak (ed.), *Balticum, Studia z dziejów Polityki, gospodarki i kultury XII-XVII wieku, ofiarowane Marianowi Biskupowi* (Toruń 1992), p. 25-33.

⁴ P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge (Mass.) 1984), p. 76.

⁵ H. Nicholson, *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights, Images of the Military orders*, 1128-1291 (Leicester 1995), p. 3; W. Urban, *The Teutonic Knights, A military history* (London 2003), p. 31-37.

The Teutonic Military Order was founded in Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the city of Acre in 1198, at the end of the German crusade, which established the German Crusades as a major force within the Crusader kingdom. It had also helped in the expansion of the northern borders of the Latin Kingdom, in the region of Beirut and Sidon.⁶ Having been informed of the death of their leader Heinrich VI in Sicily, the leaders of the German Knights, decided, before departing from the Holy Land, to leave a German force the Latin Kingdom that would contribute to the defence and strengthening of the Crusader Kingdom.⁷ This force was the Teutonic Military Order, which at the time went by the name of Saint Mary. The order's name had also borne reference to the name of holy city of Jerusalem (*hospitale sancte Marie domus Theutonice in Iherusalem*). A central objective of the Order was to assist in liberating Jerusalem from the Muslim rule, which followed the 1187 Hattin defeat, and restoring the Christian sovereignty in the city.⁸

The newly established Order had co-opted into its ranks members of the German nursing institution, which was founded in Acre in 1190, at the Third Crusade in which Germans, along with other Europeans had taken part during the siege of Acre. A field hospital was established near the city walls to treat of injured and otherwise ill combatants. The hospital had also provided help to the remainders of German troops led by Duke Friedrich von Schwaben, son of Emperor Friedrich I, who drowned in Saleph River in Anatolia during his journey to the Latin East.⁹

The newly formed Teutonic Order had had rich environment in terms of other participants. There had been, in the Crusader kingdom, other knights, European warriors, members of the Crusader royalty, Church leaders in the

⁶ 'L'Estoire de Eracles Empereur et la Conqueste de la Terre d'Outremer', *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades. Historiens Occidentaux* [RHC Occ.] vol. II (Paris 1859), p. 227-228 ['Eracles']; D. Zimmerling, *Der Deutsche Ritterorden* (Düsseldorf 1988), 121; J. Phillips, *The Crusades, 1095-1197* (Harlow 2002), p. 151-152.

⁷ *Annales Colonienses maximi*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptorum*, vol. 17 (Hannover 1861), p. 805: 'Si qui etiam in terra promissionis manere voluerint, reditus eis sufficientes in eadem terra assignari faciemus'; M. L. Favreau, *Studien zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens* (Stuttgart 1974), p. 64-66.

⁸ M. Perlbach (ed.), *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach seinen ältesten Handschriften* (Halle 1890), p. 159: 'et spe et fiducia, ut Terra Sancta christiano cultui restituta in civitate Sancta Jerusalem domus fieret eiusdem ordinis principalis, mater, caput partier et magistra'; U. Arnold, "Entstehung und Frühzeit des Deutschen ordens", J. Fleckenstein and M. Hellmann (eds.), *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas* (Sigmaringen 1980), p. 89-90, 94.

⁹ W. Hubatsch, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, *Quellensammlung zur Kulturgeschichte* 5 (Göttingen 1954), 26-31; E. Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa im Orient* (Tübingen 1977), p. 168.

Holy Land, pilgrims, merchants from the Italian trade cities and certain influential segment of the local population. Also, there had been the somewhat older Military Orders that were established in the early years of the twelfth century and the early thirteenth century to defend Christians and their territories in the Latin East. The Teutonic Order had managed to increase its power, also through the acquisition of property, which included buildings and urban and rural outposts throughout the Crusader kingdom, in Acre, Tyre, Jaffa, Caesarea, Ramla and in other parts in the north of the Kingdom. This had made the Teutonic Order one of the leading Military Order in Latin East.¹⁰

The Military Order had also enjoyed the support of German leaders who had interest in the East Mediterranean politics. The Order had served them in establishing and enhancing their political and military power base in the region. It began with the German crusade of 1197 and continued through the beginning of the thirteenth century, with the strengthening of the German power in Cyprus and in Armenia.¹¹

In 1212, shortly after his appointment, the Teutonic Grand Master Hermann von Salza (Grand Master 1210-1239), along with high-ranking German delegation, had participated in the coronation of King Leo II of Armenia. This had been recoded in the chronicle of the German pilgrim Whilbrand von Oldenberg.¹² The Teutonic Order had provided the Armenian crown with military services and acquired some rural territories, villages and the Amuda fortification. Highly impressed, the Armenian king had called them 'Maccabees', praising the Teutonic knights as the defenders of the House of Israel.¹³

¹⁰ I. Sterns, "The Teutonic Knights in the Crusader States", N. P. Zacour and H. W. Hazard (eds.), *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. 5 (Madison 1985), p. 320-321.

¹¹ S. Hauser, *Staufische Lehnspolitik am Ende des 12 Jahrhunderts, 1180-1197* (Frankfurt am Main 1998), 214; H. Houben, "I cavalieri teutonici nel Mediterraneo Orientale (sec. XII-XV), A. Giuffrida, H. Houben and K. Toomaspoeg (eds.), *Cavalieri teutonici tra Sicilia e Mediterraneo, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studio Agrigento, 24-25 marzo 2006* (Galatina 2007), p. 49-50, p. 54-55.

¹² Willbrand of Oldenburg, "Itinerarium Terrae Sanctae", S. de Sandoli (ed.), *Itinera Hierosolymitana Crucesignatorum*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem 1983) 195; C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des Croisades et la Principauté Franque d'Antioche* (Paris 1940), p. 589.

¹³ K. Forstreuter, *Der Deutsche Orden am Mittelmeer*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 2 [QSGDO] (Bonn 1967), 59-61; M. A. Chevalier, "Les chevaliers teutoniques en Cilicie: Les 'maccabées' du Royaume arménien", *Byzantinistica* 6 (2004), p. 137-145.

The Teutonic Order had increased its power and presence in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean basin. At the same time, however, it had also developed its activities in Europe, creating outposts throughout Italy, Germany, Austria and Bohemia. Some of these were received as donations, resulting from the special relationship and ties with the German Empire.¹⁴

In 1211, King András II of Hungary (1205-1235) had requested the Teutonic Order to protect the Christianity at the eastern parts of the Hungarian borders, as the Military Order did in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.¹⁵ A Teutonic document from 1211, which records this as the first Teutonic activity in Hungary, mentions the Hungarian King's agreement to donate the region of Burzenland to the Hospital of Saint Mary, which "because of our sins" had to move its centre from the holy city of Jerusalem to Acre.¹⁶

The involvement of the Teutonic Order in Hungary and its participation in the military campaign against the Cumans tribes was significant to the development of the Order's heritage in the Middle Ages. It was the first time that the Teutonic Order was asked to take part in an organised campaign against tribes that opposed the drive to convert local populations to Christianity.¹⁷ It had created a recurring pattern for the Order's activity in the first half of the thirteenth century. Thus, Konrad of Masovia from Poland had called on the Order to fight in Prussia against anti-Christians "heathen" tribes, which invaded Polish territories while refusing to accept Christianity.¹⁸ What

¹⁴ M. Tumler, *Der Deutsche Orden im Werden, Wachsen und Wirken bis 1400* (Wien 1955), p. 54-57; K. Militzer, "Der Deutsche Orden in den Großen Städten des Deutschen Reichs", U. Arnold (ed.), *Stadt und Orden. Das Verhältnis des Deutschen Ordens zu den Städten in Livland, Preussen und im Deutschen Reich*, QSGDO 44 (Marburg 1993), p. 188-215.

¹⁵ H. Zimmermann, "Der Deutsche Ritterorden in Siebenbürgen", J. Fleckenstein and M. Hellmann (eds.), *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas* (Sigmaringen 1980), p. 271-275; N. Berend, "Hungary, 'the Gate of Christendom' ", D. Abulafia and N. Berend (eds.), *Medieval Frontiers, Concepts and Practices* (Aldershot 2002), p. 202-213; J. R. Sweeney, "Hungary in the Crusades, 1169-1218", *The International History Review* 3,4 (1981), p. 467-481.

¹⁶ E. Strehlke (ed.), *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex tabularii regii Berolinensis codice potissimum* (Berlin 1869; repr. Toronto and Jerusalem 1975), no. 158 (1211), p. 156: 'Andreas, Ungariae rex, cruciferis de hospitali s. Marie, quod quandoque fuit Ierusalem, sed modo peccatis exigentibus situm est in Accaron..'

¹⁷ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. I, (eds.) F. Zimmermann and C. Werner (Hermannstadt 1892), p. 11-12.

¹⁸ G. Labuda, "Die Urkunden, Über die Anfänge des Deutschen Ordens in Kulmerland und in Preußen in den Jahren 1226-1243", J. Fleckenstein and M. Hellmann (eds.), *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas* (Sigmaringen 1980), p. 299-316; E. N. Johnson, "The German Crusade on the Baltic", H. W. Hazard (ed.), *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 3 (Madison 1975), p. 569-571, p. 576-577; H. Boockmann, *Der Deutsche Orden. Zwölf Kapitel aus seiner Geschichte*

the Order had practised in Burzenland became the first European lesson to be applied later in Prussia and Livonia.

The presence of the Teutonic Order in Burzenland had contributed to their position and status in this region.¹⁹ They had built a series of stone fortresses that controlled the area and provided protection to the newly settled rural population that was driven to the region by hostile actions of the local tribes. In an area where most fortifications were made of wood, the stone-made fortifications of the Teutonic Order were highly innovative, representing strength and fortitude and a warning, if not a direct threat, to the Comans tribes, and certainly a credible defence. These impenetrable outposts presented real barrier in the eastern border of Hungary. Moreover, they served as bases from which the Teutonic Order raided pagan tribes' territories along the Hungarian borders.²⁰

During their presence in Burzenland (1211-1225), the Teutonic Order had built five strongholds, with towers incorporated into the stone walls. Hungary had a long-standing tradition of fortifications, since the Roman period, but usually they were built of wood, which was readily available locally. In the Crusader Kingdom, the Teutonic Order was exposed to fortifications constructed of stone and it grew to prefer them to the wooden structures, mainly since they proved more resilient and defensible. The Teutonic Order had developed a method whereby they had built a strong stone tower for defending builders employed in construction of their castles - and later on, those resided in the castles. Once the stone tower was completed, construction of a wooden wall followed next. It had usually included a square wall next to the tower. The Teutonic members also converted existing wooden fortifications into stone structures.²¹

The five fortifications in Burzenland were in Marienburg, Schwarzburg, Rosenau, Kreuzburg and Kronstadt. Only two of them – the ones in Kreuzburg and Marienburg were built of stone. The Marienburg fortress was built within a square walled enclosure with four corner towers. The east tower

(Münich 1981), p. 70-93; N. Housley (ed.), *Documents on the Later Crusades, 1274-1580* (London 1996), p. 54-55.

¹⁹ *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonicæ* no. 158-166, p. 156-159.

²⁰ G. Anghel, "Les premiers donjons en Pierre de Transylvanie (Roumanie)", *Château Gaillard* 8 (1977), p. 8-18; A. A. Rusu, "Die Frage der vom Deutschen Orden im Südosten Siebenbürgens errichteten Burgen", *Castrum Bene* 5 (1996), p. 166-172.

²¹ J. Laszlovszky, Z. Soós, "Historical Monuments of the Teutonic Order in Transylvania", Z. Hunyadi and J. Laszlovszky (eds.), *Crusades and the Military Orders* (Budapest 2001), p. 325-328.

was larger than the other structures. It was probably built first, before the completion of the wall. This building was unique and its construction differed from typical fortresses in Hungary. The stones were large and massive so as to withstand earthquakes that were common in the region at the time. Kreuzburg Fortress was built as a stone fortress in 1212, but not so many parts of it had survived or were discovered by archaeological excavations.²² However, excavations in the site reveal square towers that were built in the same format of square fortifications in the Latin East, such as the one in Mi'ilya (Castellum Regis) or ones found in the southern part of Italy in Trani and in Castel Ursino.²³

While there can be no dispute over the actual contribution of the Teutonic Order to the defence of Burzenland in the eastern part of Hungary, the Order and its activities had been subject to much criticism by the Hungarian aristocracy and also, at times, by the royalty. The Teutonic Knights in Burzenland were accused to have been autonomous forces that had acted against the king's authority. As it were, they had undermined the Hungarian nobility while attempting to consolidate their own power within Burzenland.

Their independence was considered as a military threat, thus invoking suspicion and disapproval on the part of the Hungarian nobility and royalty. As a result, the Teutonic position in both Hungary and in the Papal court had been weakened and even Teutonic Grand Master Hermann von Salza who was in a very high position rank was unable to change that deterioration. In 1225, the Teutonic Order was eventually expelled from Burzenland and was forced to abandon that region. This was not too well accepted by the Teutonic Knights and leadership and it was, to an extent, a reason for their acceptance the mission of defending the northern borders of Poland and for their invasion into Prussia, in 1230.²⁴

Several Teutonic Order researchers tend to contend that both members and leadership of the Order sought to establish an independent entity in

²² *Ibid*, p. 328-332.

²³ For the early Teutonic fortifications in the Latin East see: W. Hubatsch, "German Crusader Castles in the Near East", W. Hubatsch (ed.), *Studies in Medieval and Modern German History* (Oxford 1985), p. 4; R. Ellenblum, "Colonization Activities in the Frankish East: The Example of Castellum Regis (Mi'ilya)", *English Historical Review* 111 (1996), p. 104-122; A. J. Boas, *Archaeology of the Military Orders* (London 2006), p. 118-120.

²⁴ U. Arnold, "Eight Hundred Years of the Teutonic Order", M. Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders, Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, vol. 1 (Hampshire 1994), p. 225; K. Militzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg, Verfassung, Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur des Deutschen Ordens 1190-1309*, QSGDO 56 (Marburg 1999), p. 334-335; *ibid*, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens* (Stuttgart 2005), p. 62.

Burzenland, replacing it for their well established centre in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.²⁵ It could be argued, however, to the contrary, that the Teutonic Order's activities in Hungary had not intended to disconnect itself from its involvement and presence in the Latin East or its centre and focal point there. This argument is accentuated by military and other activities that took place in the Latin East at the same time when the Teutonic Order had been active also in Hungary. The political reality in the Latin East was such that it required amalgamation of military activities with religious involvement in the overall political scene of the Latin East.²⁶

The Teutonic military involvement in the Fifth Crusade (1217-1221) is a case in point. The contribution of this involvement in the Fifth Crusade to the rise of the Teutonic Order's status in the Latin East as well as in Europe was great. The Teutonic Order fought in Egypt side by side with the Crusades army, the other Military Orders and many European Knights and nobles. In once case, the battle over the city of Damietta at the Nile delta, after a lengthy siege and protracted battles around the city, it was captured in February 1219.²⁷ Among the many Christian casualties, 50 were members of the Templar Order, 32 were Hospitallers and 30 soldiers were Teutonic Knights.²⁸ Less than a year later, in 1220, the Teutonic forces were attacked in Damietta by Muslim forces. At the end of the crusade, in 1221, Hermann von Salza returned to the battle scene in Damietta. The Teutonic leader participated in the negotiations that led to the return of Damietta to the Muslims as part of Christian retreat from Egypt.²⁹

The Fifth Crusade brought recognition of Teutonic Knights and their contribution by many European rulers and nobles. One such a ruler was King András II of Hungary, who was one of the leaders of the Fifth Crusade. He had been in the Latin Kingdom in 1217, attending the Crusade conference

²⁵ W. Urban, *The Prussian Crusade*, Lanham 1980, pp. 41-43, 48; A. Forey, *The Military Orders, From the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Toronto 1992), p. 34-35; *ibid*, "The Military Orders – 1120-1312, J. Riley-Smith (ed.), *Illustrated History of Crusades* (Oxford 1995), p. 188.

²⁶ N. E. Morton, *The Teutonic Order in the Holy Land* (Woodbridge 2009), p. 172-174, p. 185-188; S. Lotan, "The Development of the Teutonic Military Order, 1190-1309 – Interrelations between the Latin East and Europe", *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 38 (2010), p. 299-304.

²⁷ J. M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade 1213-1221* (Philadelphia 1986), p. 160-161.

²⁸ 'Iohannes Codagnelli Gesta obsidionis Damiatiae 1217-1219', ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH Scriptorum*, vol. 31 (Hannover 1903), p. 490: '...ita decapitate sunt sine numero de Christianis: de Templariis L milites, de Alamannis XXX, de Hospitalariis XXXII..'.
²⁹ Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia Damiatina', ed. H. Hoogeweg, *Bibliothek des litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart*, vol. 202 (Tübingen 1894), p. 252-253.

that was held in Acre and fighting along with the Crusades in Galilee.³⁰ At the time, the Templar Order, together with the Teutonic Order carried out reconstruction of the fortification of Caesarea and of the 'Atlit (Château Pèlerin).³¹ This, as well as other activities of the Teutonic order, had led the Hungarian King to commend the vital role of the Teutonic Order in defending the Crusader Kingdom, suggesting that the Hungarian Crown had at the time rather amicable relationship with the Teutonic order. However, this relationship had deteriorated in the early twenties of the thirteenth century.

The protracted battle in Damietta during the Fifth Crusade, had contributed to the strengthening of the Teutonic Order power and political status in the Latin Kingdom and throughout Europe. The Teutonic commitment to the battle in Damietta brought about spurred a considerable wave of identification with the Teutonic Order and its glorification. Following the fighting in Egypt, the European nobles in Germany and Northern France granted the Order institutions agricultural land, rural holdings and urban properties. This had strengthened the economic situation of the Military Order and supported its strongholds in both the Latin Kingdom and in Europe.³²

In this context, the noble Friedrich III, who serves as part of the European nobility in the Fifth Crusade, is worth mentioning. He called on the Teutonic Knights to settle and defend areas of Styria region. The Teutonic Order accepted his call and settled in the Ptuj.³³ It seems that this was also a result of the Teutonic Military Order excellence in Damietta, which had contributed to their growing power in Europe and had enhanced their spread into new areas which were used as a shield and defence at the service of local rulers.

The Fifth Crusade also contributed to the strengthening of the military and political position of the Teutonic Order in the Crusader Kingdom. It had received grants from the noble Leopold IV of Austria, who participated in the Fifth Crusade in 1219 and had left for the Teutonic Order 6,000 Mark which

³⁰ 'Eracles', p. 321; G. Adriányi, "Zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ritterordens in Siebenbürgen", *Ungaren-Jahrbuch* 3 (1971), p. 15-16.

³¹ 'Oliver of Paderborn', 169: "Templarii vero cum domino Galthero de Avennis et paucis auxiliatoribus peregrinis et Hospitali de domo Teutonicorum castrum Peregrinorum quod olim Districtum appellabatur."; 'Eracles', p. 325-326.

³² K. Van Eickels, "Knightly Hospitallers or Crusading Knights? Decisive Factors for the Spread of the Teutonic Knights in the Rhineland and the Low Countries, 1216-1300", H. Nicholson (ed.), *The Military Orders, Welfare and Warfare*, vol. 2 (Aldershot 1998), p. 77-78.

³³ M. Kosi, "The Age of the Crusades in the South-East of the Empire (between the Alps and the Adriatic)", Z. Hunyadi and J. Laszlovszky (eds.), *Crusades and the Military Orders* (Budapest 2001), p. 142-143.

was used to acquire a large fief in Galilee named the Joscelin fief. This plot was located in the heart of the Upper Galilee with its central fortress – Castellum Regis in Mi'ilya. This property was on the borders of some large rural areas in the Galilee, near to the main coastal cities of Acre and Tyre. It belonged to one of the leaders of the Crusader Kingdom, Joscelin de Courtenay and after his death it was divided among his heirs. One of the heirs was his daughter, Beatrice, whose husband was the German noble Otto von Hennberg who wanted to return to his noble territory in Germany. In 1220, Beatrice sold her feudal rights to the Teutonic Order, which later on, in 1227, had set up there their headquarters of Montfort Fortress (Starkenbergh).³⁴ There is no doubt that these activities had served towards the strengthening of the Teutonic Order in the Latin East and further accentuated the central role of the region to the Military Order.

The centrality and importance of the Latin Kingdom to the Teutonic Order outlasted the failure of the Fifth Crusade and the withdrawal from Egypt. The attempts of the Pope and the Church to arrange the Crusade under the leadership of Emperor Friedrich II Hohenstaufen the main role of Grand Master Hermann von Salza in this endeavour had actually changed the situation in region. Hermann von Salza's involvement had caused him to travel to Europe to promote the organisation of the planned Crusade and to further enhance the importance of the Crusader Kingdom and that of the Emperor in the Latin East.

These diplomatic activities had contributed also to the strengthening of the Teutonic Order in the Latin East. The importance of the Teutonic presence in this region was further accentuated in view of the disagreements between Emperor and Pope. However, his attempts to achieve reconciliation between the rival parties, had also contributed to the deterioration of the relationship with local nobles in Hungary.³⁵

The Teutonic Order had thus deteriorated from being highly influential and esteemed for its contribution to the defence of Hungary's eastern borders to a marginal group with no political support. And it happened because of its

³⁴ W. Hubatsch, *Montfort und die Bildung des Deutschordensstaates um Heiligen Lande*, (Göttingen 1966), p. 183, H. E. Mayer, "Die Seigneurie de Joscelin und der Deutsche Orden", J. Fleckenstein and M. Hellmann (eds.), *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas* (Sigmaringen 1980), 189-190, p. 192-194; R. Frankel, "Topographical Notes on the Territory of Acre in the Crusader Period", *Israel Exploration Journal* 38, 4 (1988), 249-272; H. Kennedy, *Crusader Castles* (Cambridge 1994), p. 129-131.

³⁵ H. Kluger, *Hochmeister Hermann von Salza und Kaiser Friedrich II*, QSGDO 37 (Marburg 1987), p. 60-62.

political involvement in the conflict that governed the relationship of the Roman Empire and the Pope. The result was that by 1225, the Teutonic Order was forced by the Hungarian royalty to leave Burzenland, putting thus an end to its attempt to stabilise the region.³⁶ It continued further with the departure of the Teutonic Order, along with Emperor Friedrich II's troops from the Latin East and its new drive into the Baltic region in Prussia.³⁷

It can well be concluded that the presence of the Teutonic Order in eastern Hungary had not been an attempt to divorce itself from the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, where it had its centre which continued to region the Order's activities. It did serve the Military Order in furthering its institutional authority and standing amongst its membership. It also contributed to their image as defenders and promoted of Christianity and, of course, it had reinforced their settlement drive in Eastern Europe.

In this sense, their presence in Hungary was an introduction to the Teutonic history and spread in the Baltic region. Burzenland was not candidate that could or would replace their Crusader Kingdom central religious and political focal place. In fact, their presence in the Latin East had remain, or maybe even was further accentuated, for their strengthening entire activity in both the Latin East and eastern Europe as the defenders of Christendom.

³⁶ 'Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen', no. 45, no. 51, no. 53; Z. Hunyadi, "The Teutonic Order in Burzenland (1211-1225): new re-considerations.", H. Houben, and K. Toomaspoeg (eds.), *L'Ordine Teutonico tra Mediterraneo e Baltico: incontri e scontri tra religioni, popoli e culture*. Acta Teutonica 5 (Galatino 2008), p. 151-170.

³⁷ E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades, The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100-1525* (Minneapolis 1980), p. 78-81; S. Gouguenheim, "L'ordre Teutonique en Prusse au XIII siècle, Expansion de la chrétienté latine et souveraineté politique", XXXIII Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiéviste de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Madrid, Casa de Velázquez, p. 23-26 mai 2002), *L'Expansion occidentale (XI-XV siècles). Formes et conséquences* (Paris 2003), p. 97-105; I. Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusade 1147-1254* (Leiden 2007), p. 205-210.